

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) National Highways Act, 1956, empowers the Central Government to levy and collect user fee (Toll) on bridges and road sections of National Highways. National Highways (Rate of Fee) Rules, 1997 provide the capping rate of user fee per Km. for projects involving conversion into four lane. The rules also provide rates of user fee to be charged on the bridges on the basis of initial cost of the bridge. The National Highways (collection of fees by any person for the use of section of National Highways/Permanent Bridge/Temporary Bridge on National Highways) Rules, 1997 provide guidelines of collection of user fee by any person. The National Highways (Fee for the use National Highways section and permanent Bridge-Public Funded Project) Rules, 1997 provide for collection of user fee on public funded projects.

(b) The collection of user fee on public funded projects is primarily done through Director General of Resettlement (DGR) sponsored ex-servicemen agencies and also through competitive biddings. In the case of Build Operate and Transfer (BOT) projects, user fee collection is done/retained by the concessionaire for the agreed concession period.

(c) Service tax is not payable on user fee (toll) collection contracts either through departmental or through competitive bidding.

(d) The user fee is to be collected in perpetuity.

Container security initiatives

1751. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Container Security initiatives had been introduced in most of the ports in the world;

(b) if so, whether it has been introduced in our Indian ports; and

(c) if not, what are the bottlenecks for it and by when such hurdles can be overcome and the security initiatives are introduced?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) At present 50 seaports in the world are participating in the Container Security Initiative (CSI) programme. These ports account for approximately 82% of all containerised merchandise imported into US.

(b) and (c) CSI will be introduced as a pilot project at Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), Mumbai after finalization of the terms and conditions of the programme.

Container Security Initiatives

1752. DR. K: MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the U.S. and many countries of the world have introduced Container Security Initiative in ports to avoid delay for exports besides facilitating fast movements of Containers, reducing bottlenecks, increasing space availability, etc.;

(b) what is the reaction of Government in introducing this modern facility;

(c) what is the present stage of action on this; and

(d) whether there is any joint venture in the offing?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (d) At present 50 seaports in the world are participating in the Container Security Initiative (CSI) programme. These ports account for approximately 82% of all containerised merchandise imported into US. CSI will be introduced as pilot project at Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), Mumbai after finalization of the terms and conditions of the programme.

CBI Raids at NHAI's official residences

1753. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the CBI has conducted searches at the residential and official premises of the officials of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) for alleged cheating, forgery and abuse of official position for sub-standard works between Panipat and Sonapat stretch of the National Highway; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the stringent steps taken by Government to curb such misuse and corruption?